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ABSTRACT

This booklet is one of a series of reports addressing the most critical issues confronting state boards of education throughout the United States. Each report attempts to present a concise, informative review and analysis of the best and most current information available on one of these critical topics. This booklet focuses on ways of increasing the public visibility, responsiveness, and effectiveness of state boards of education. Section 1 contains a brief overview and summary of the booklet; section 2 presents a review and analysis of guidelines for increasing state board effectiveness by Tim L. Mazzoni, Jr.; section 3 presents a number of action alternatives recommended by the staff of the National Association of State Boards of Education; and section 4 contains footnotes and a brief annotated bibliography prepared by the author of section 2. (Author/JG)

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THE IMPERATIVE OF LEADERSHIP

Volume II, Number 4

A REPORT ON DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE AND VISIBLE STATE BOARDS OF EDUCATION

NASBE

EA 008 831

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This report represents Volume II, No. 4 in NASBE's *Imperative of Leadership* series, made available with funds provided by ESEA, P.L. 89-10, Title V, Section 505, through the State of New York. Volume I contained the following reports sent free-of-charge to all NASBE members: *Educational Governance* (No. 1); *Reforming School Finance* (No. 2); *Strengthening and Improving Relationships Between State Boards of Education and Legislators* (No. 3); *Accountability and Assessment* (No. 4); *The Education of Disadvantaged and Minority Children: A Multicultural Perspective* (No. 5); *The Planning, Improvement and Governance of Vocational and Vocational-Technical Education* (No. 6).

Volume II contains to date: *Declining Enrollments* (No. 1); *Developing Effective and Visible State Boards of Education* (No. 2); and *Developing Board Agendas That Focus On Policy* (No. 3).

Volume II, No. 1, on *Declining Enrollments* is made available through funds provided by the National Institute of Education (NIE). Volume II, No. 8, on *Preventive Health Education* will be funded by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Center for Disease Control, Atlanta, Georgia.

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PREFACE

This report on *Developing Effective and Visible State Boards of Education* is fourth in a second volume of research articles on timely issues of concern to State Boards of Education. Publication of these *Imperatives of Leadership* reports is made available to all NASBE members with funds provided by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA, Public Law 89-10, Title V, Section 505), through the State of New York.

The first report in this series, on *Declining Enrollments*, was published with funds provided by the National Institute of Education (NIE), Washington, D.C.

Reports on the following topics are being published in Volume II:

- **Declining Enrollments**
- **Developing Board Agendas That Focus on Policy**
- **Community Education**
- **Career Education**
- **Developing Consistent and Cooperative Constituency Linkages**
- **Alternative Methods of Teacher Certification**

An eighth report on ***Preventive Health Education*** will be published early next year, and is being funded through the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Center for Disease Control, Atlanta, Georgia.

The report that follows is organized into four sections. Section I presents a condensed *Overview Summary* of the research text contained in Section II. Section III, the *Action Alternatives*, contains recommendations developed by the NASBE staff. Section IV is an *Appendix*, consisting of Footnotes and an Annotated Bibliography.

NASBE wishes to express its appreciation to Dr. Tim L. Mazzoni, Jr., Associate Professor, Department of Educational Administration, the University of Minnesota, St. Paul, Minnesota, who wrote the research text contained in Section II.

Grant L. Anderson
NASBE President

October, 1976
Denver, Colorado

SECTION I

Overview Summary

"Effective Boards are those whose preferences carry significant weight in the deciding of school policy."

The most effective Boards will also reflect the sentiments of the citizenry they represent, that is, they will be broadly based.

These two points are made by the author, as well as a basic assumption that effective Boards also will be visible ones. The problems, however, that a Board faces in achieving maximum effectiveness are many, including: the part-time nature of school boards; modest technical expertise of many Board members; few data resources; legislative constraints; self perceptions that sometimes limit what a Board will attempt to do; overshadowing by the state department of education.

Boards desiring to enhance their effectiveness are urged to concentrate their efforts in five specific areas:

- **Formal Structure.** Mazzoni notes that the least effective Boards vis-a-vis policy are those without a voice in the selection of their state's chief state school officer (CSSO). He suggests that changes in a state's governing structure, that is, those changes provided through regular elections, supply opportunities for modifying the educational governance system in that state.

State Board members are advised also to work toward achieving a viable *network of personal influence*—including legislative and executive contacts—as well as to consider initiating more formal linkages, e.g., a governor's advisory committee and the like.

- **Information Resources.** Basic to satisfactory policy influence is a reasonably complete understanding of the issues upon which Boards are expected to act. Boards may consider the advisability of employing their own staffs in an attempt to balance state department of education domination as an information resource. A close working relationship with state department personnel is, however, vital to optimum Board effectiveness.
- **Time Organization.** Honestly evaluate how your Board—and you as a Board member—spend time. Since Boards are part-time to begin with, it is especially crucial that they stringently guide their actions when in session.

A *time utilization study* might be considered. Then, if warranted, Boards might opt for establishing standing committees on specific issues.

- **Credibility with Lawmakers.** The role of state legislators and governors in school policy making is increasing, yielding a situation in which it is crucial that there be mutual respect between them and State Board members.

Some factors that tarnish State Board credibility with state lawmakers include:

- excessive dependence on the CSSO;
- lack of expertise on educational policy;
- factionalism and public disputes with the CSSC.

• **Policy Role Expectations.** A traditional distaste for the politics of "lobbying" has diminished State Board effectiveness over the years. Boards cannot rely on other groups--including the state department—to do their work for them.

The composition of State Boards may or may not interfere with their responsibilities to the general citizenry. Studies have shown that most Board members are white, male, middleaged and college graduates. About one-half of them earn in excess of $30,000 a year. It is suggested that an honorarium for Board members' attendance at meetings might make the job more appealing to persons of more modest income.

The use of task forces and advisory committees, as well as holding Board meetings in places and times that enhance their accessibility to the public, are forward steps being attempted by some Boards to increase citizen input. □

SECTION II

Developing Effective and Visible State Boards of Education

By Tim L. Mazzoni, Jr.
Associate Professor, Educational Administration
University of Minnesota, St. Paul, Minnesota.

Before examining how State Boards can become more effective, a prior question must be posed: What constitutes effectiveness for a State Board of Education? There are many legitimate answers to this question. State Boards are charged with a range of responsibilities, each the subject of diverse expectations. Still, the *raison d'etre* of the institution is clear; in the words of Commissioner Ewald Nyquist of New York, "the consideration of policy issues and the making of policy are the prime reasons for the existence of state boards of education."[1] The basic criterion, therefore, of Board effectiveness must be policy influence.

Effective Boards are those whose preferences carry significant weight in the deciding of state school policy. As for the nature of these preferences, the commitment to representative democracy argues that they be broad-based and that they reflect the various segments of the citizenry within a state. *Representativeness*, then, must be the second basic criterion of Board effectiveness.

POLICY INFLUENCE

In many states the relatively stable education policy system of a decade ago has given way to a more fluid and politicized pattern of relationships. This transformation presents new opportunities as well as new risks for policy making participants. On one hand, there is the potential for expanded influence for those who have the resources, determination and skill to respond appropriately. On the other hand, those who lack or who will not develop these attributes confront the prospect of being excluded from policy influence. State Boards, like other system actors, face a challenge with critical implications for their future role.

The Constraints

Many factors limit the influence of State Boards. Some stem from a deficiency of resources, others from the institutional setting, and still others from the role expectations of Board members.

State Board members serve on a part-time basis, often have little technical expertise and rely on few data sources. Unlike their local counterparts, State Boards have no power to tax and their policy making involvement is constricted, sometimes narrowly, by the activity of the legislature. Board mem-

bers, too, have been limited by their own role expectations, notably their disinclination to engage in such "political" behavior as lobbying.

Along with these constraints, the State Board that aspires to be influential will frequently have to overcome deeply ingrained habits of thought and action, for historically—if empirical research is to be believed—State Boards have tended to be only minor participants in state education policy making. In 1962 Bailey and his colleagues, drawing upon their inquiry in eight Northeastern states, concluded that "members of state boards in the Northeast do not sit in the councils of the mighty in school politics."[2] Two years later (1964), Masters, Salisbury and Eliot published their work on state school policy making in Illinois, Michigan and Missouri. Again, State Boards were not identified as part of the "power structure"; in fact, there was hardly any mention made of their involvement.[3] A similar silence is found in the twelve-state comparative report produced in 1969 by Usdan, Minar and Hurwitz. They did observe that it was the chief state school officer (CSSO) who had "the equipment to assume leadership over the board."[4]

Of the major research studies completed in the 1960's only Sroufe's (Sroufe, Gerald, *State School Board Members and the State Education Policy System*, 1971) focused exclusively on State Boards. In 1967 and 1968 some 300 Board members in forty-five states responded to a survey questionnaire. Sroufe inferred, principally from the self-role expectations of these officials, that "state boards of education, rhetoric to the contrary, have little capability as actors in the education policy system of the state."[5] He stressed that respondents rejected the idea of active lobbying to increase the amount of money appropriated for the state education program. Instead, they accepted this basic allocation as a given.

Consistent with this limiting view, Sroufe found that Board members had minimal personal contacts with governors and legislative leaders. State Board/CSSO relationships were analyzed by Sroufe who concluded that "on the whole, state board members have no more control in practice over their chief state school officer than they have influence with their legislatures."[6]

The most recent research providing information on State Board performance was carried out in 1973 by the Ohio State University's Educational Governance Project (EGP). (See Campbell, Roald and Tim Mazzoni, Jr., *State Policy Making For the Public Schools: A Comparative Analysis*, Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University, 1974.) Basing its judgments on the perceptions of interviewees in legislatures, governors' offices and education interest groups, as well as in state education agencies, the EGP concurred with Sroufe's assessment.

The typical Board in its ten-state sample was perceived as having little independent influence in the legislative arena and as being overshadowed by the CSSO in agency policy making. Kirst has reviewed EGP findings on legislative relationships; they will not be restated here.[7] Some EGP findings on the agency influence of State Boards do warrant discussion, however.

Because of their constitutional or statutory authority, or both, the State Boards examined by the EGP had much more to say about school policies enacted by the education agency than about those determined in the legislature. The dominant influence, nonetheless, was the chief state school officer.

To give some examples of perceptions: Three out of four Board member respondents pointed to the CSSO as being "very important" in their developing "a perspective on state education policy issues." *Agenda-setting for State Board meetings was done almost entirely by the CSSO and his staff.* Virtually all Board members identified these administrators as the main source of information on agenda items; some 47 per cent implied that they had no other source upon whom they "sometimes" relied. Though the policy making behavior of CSSO's undoubtedly reflected to some extent their anticipation of the desires of State Boards, less than one-third (29 per cent) of the Board member respondents checked "often" when asked how frequently their CSSO took "ideas and

suggestions" from Board officials. Lastly, some 70 per cent of the education interest groups interviewed said they saw no "real direction" on policy matters ever being given the CSSO by the State Board.[8]

Along with obtaining perceptions, the EGP did case analyses in each state of selected issues—school finance, certification, desegregation and program improvement. These analyses indicated that most policy making functions were monopolized by state department of education (SDE) administrators. Admittedly, Board involvement might have been overlooked in the investigation of lengthy and complex decision processes. In the words of a knowledgeable observer, "In some cases, the policy recommendation attributed to the CSSO really started as the result of an individual Board member's personal inputs, research and digging for alternatives and then working with the CSSO and SDE staff."

But the EGP case studies did not reveal many decision processes where the State Board's *overt* actions marked it as the central policy actor or as sharing that role with the CSSO.[9]

The generalizations that emerge from the research literature are not comforting to those who urge State Boards to be active policy makers. The picture, however, is not without encouraging signs. Some Boards help formulate the agenda, consult varied sources of information, react creatively to the recommendations of chiefs and work to influence lawmakers and other state actors. Some Boards, in short, have an appreciable impact on their policy system. Many scholars have documented the powerful position long enjoyed by the New York Board of Regents.[10] And the EGP staff pointed to several other Boards as assuming policy leadership. Indeed, a number of Boards ranked low by the EGP are now reported as wielding legislative influence.[11]

Strategic Areas for Expanding Board Influence

What does the research have to say to State Boards intent on expanding their policy influence? In my judgment, the research suggests the strategic importance of five areas: (1) formal structure, (2) information resources, (3) organization of time, (4) credibility with lawmakers, and (5) Board member policy role expectations.

- **Formal Structure.** Changes in the structure of government always have potential for redistributing power—in this case, for strengthening the relative influence of State Boards. While modifying structure can never guarantee desired performance, it may facilitate such performance. The research indicates two structural areas worthy of serious Board attention.

The first is the ambiguous authority of State Boards that cannot select and remove their chiefs. Sroufe discovered that Board members in these circumstances had even more modest expectations for influencing the chief than was generally the case.[12] In the EGP rankings, the weakest State Boards were those unable to choose their chief.[13] To be sure, elected and governor-appointed CSSO's endeavor on occasion to bolster Board influence. But this is an expression of personal commitment, not of formal structure.

A second structural problem is the isolation of many State Boards, an isolation that usually is part of a more general fragmentation. Educational groups have become so disunited in some states that common policies often are not sought, let alone found. School people and politicians talk *past* each other, fostering misunderstanding and mistrust. In this fragmented milieu, State Boards lack adequate forums through which the school needs of the state can be represented to state lawmakers, education leaders and agency heads.

Informal networks of personal influence, created and maintained by Board members, are one appropriate response to this condition. Needed as well are more formal linkage structures—perhaps, a governor's advisory

council—that would bring the key policy actors together on a continuous basis to explore educational issues and priorities.

• **Information Resources.** "Knowledge is power" for State Boards as for other actors. Without information resources, understanding of issues is impossible; nor can there be policy influence derived from such understanding. The EGP analysis showed a sizable correlation between influential State Boards and the utility of state department information. This study also found that Boards relied almost completely on the state department for information. To the small extent that Board members turned to other sources, these sources were mostly educators and their allies.[14]

That a State Board is dependent on information selected and interpreted by state department administrators is emphasized by those who maintain that Boards should have their own staffs. In some states persons from the CSSO's office might have sufficient independence and integrity to provide this function. In other states, staff assistants from outside the CSSO's office would have to be sought. In either case these staffs would not decide issues for Board members. Rather, they would assist the Board by outlining the problem and options involved.

Staffing proposals like this provoke strenuous objections. Critics cite problems ranging from increased costs and duplicated effort to communication "gaps" between Boards and chiefs. Although proponents and opponents of Board staffs express considerable certainty about the results of such a proposal, there really is no hard evidence since there have been no operating examples. What is suggested, then, is that a few Boards be willing to experiment with independent staffs, designing their efforts so that an outside agency could gather and disseminate evaluative data on advantages and disadvantages.

• **Time Organization.** By investing time, a policy actor can extend influence over an issue. State Boards, judging from the EGP sample, devote less than the equivalent of one week a month to Board service, and the bulk of that time is spent on activities other than policy making. Cox and Anderson, in their investigation of two Boards, discovered that the administrative operating function consumed three quarters of both Board's total decisions.[15] As for the significance of time usage, it is noteworthy that in the EGP research, the single strongest correlate of State Board policy influence was the "emphasis in SBE (State Board of Education) meetings on nonroutine matters."[16]

The point of departure for a State Board interested in redirecting its time use would be detailed information on the specifics of its existing patterns. A *time utilization study* could provide such information along with creating a benchmark for evaluating subsequent changes.

Board members must consider, too, how their time could maximize a policy focus. Besides the implications this has for agenda items and meeting conduct, more attention might be given to standing committees. Committees offer a structural mechanism for extending Board member time through a division of labor, for processing many routine matters that must come before a Board, and for acquiring the specialized knowledge these officials need if they are to understand the complexities of contemporary policy issues. Not without problems—among them the temptation for Board members to "meddle" in administrative operations—standing committees could contribute to both the time and the expertise required for effective policy making involvement.

• **Credibility with Lawmakers.** Given the expanded participation of legislators and governors in school policy making, it is crucial that State Boards have credibility with these lawmakers. Yet it is precisely in this area that State Boards traditionally have been weakest. Educational Governance Project respondents in the legislature and governor's office frequently made depreciative comments about the State Board. Boards, in their judgment, were simply not to be taken seriously as policy actors. Factors that undermined Board credibility included:

- **excessive dependence on the CSSO;**
- **inability to mobilize a constituency;**
- **lack of expertise on education policy;**
- **absence of personal channels of communication with the legislature;**
- **factionalism and public disputes with the CSSO.**[17]

Even Boards appointed by the governor had no great access to their chief executive. Surprisingly enough, appointed Boards were rated by the EGP staff as having less influence with the chief executive than did elected ones.[18]

Some State Boards in recent years have taken action to improve their standing with lawmakers. For example: In Nebraska, legislators now attend Board meetings and Board members are requested to testify before legislative committees. In California, Governor Brown uses his appointees to the Board as education advisers.[19] Although the situation in these two states represents a marked improvement from that reported in the EGP study, credibility remains a fundamental concern for State Boards. In this connection, Board members would especially profit from Kirst's tough-minded analysis and recommendations.[20]

- **Policy Role Expectations.** Possession of resources by a State Board does not automatically translate into policy influence. Much hinges on the willingness of a Board to apply its resources. In the past, the policy role expectations of State Boards have diminished their influence. One dimension of this has been a distaste for lobbying and legislative involvement. Here, as has been mentioned, change is occurring as Board members recognize that they cannot rely solely on formal channels and on the CSSO to carry their program into the legislature; that points of personal access need to be established with state lawmakers. A second dimension is the policy role orientation that State Boards hold for their chief executive officers.

Despite most Board member respondents in the EGP study indicating that they wanted to be policy makers, their conception of the policy role of the CSSO was remarkably expansive. Board members advanced a set of expectations for the CSSO which cast that administrator as the key innovator, formulator, advocate and influential in state education policy making.[21] If the pendulum of power in agency policy making has swung a long way toward the CSSO, then Board members must review and revise their role expectations. Those described by the EGP envisage so sweeping a policy role for the chief as to cause concern about which functions, other than advice and approval, State Boards themselves are willing to perform.

Achieving a proper balance does *not* mean denigrating the expertise of CSSO's or their vital contribution to the leadership team. These would not be demeaned if the CSSO were to formulate proposals from the expressed wishes of Board members more frequently; if Board members were invited to offer constructive criticism of these proposals more frequently; or if Board members were to participate personally in communications with state lawmakers more frequently. The relationship should be one in which the Board along with the chief is a full and active partner. Mutually supportive behavior will contribute to the policy influence of both parties in the legislature and governor's office, where such influence is presently wanting.

WHO DOES THE STATE BOARD REPRESENT?

For a State Board to be a voice for citizens it, first, has to understand their preferences and; second, take them into account in its advocacy role. While

influence is always necessary for Board leadership, it is never sufficient. Boards must be sensitive to the public will if the criterion of democratic representation is to be satisfied.

Obviously, there are times when the expressed desires of the citizenry are at odds with its needs as interpreted by policy makers, or when responsiveness to popular demands runs counter to the advice of professional educators. Each of these is a relevant consideration for State Boards. *But in seeking to balance these considerations, a Board should insist on the ultimate primacy of citizen preferences.* In this regard, Board leadership must go beyond including existing citizen preferences in policy formulation to educating the public so that it might constitute one informed basis for Board decision making.

Put differently, *Boards must shape popular attitudes as well as reflect them.*

The representative capacity of State Boards has been hampered by their social composition, a composition so homogeneous and upper-middle class that the ability to represent varied citizen interests is suspect. The EGP found, for instance, that its Board respondents were overwhelmingly white (94 per cent), male (75 per cent), and middleaged (84 per cent being at least 41 years of age). Slightly more than two-thirds were in business or professional occupations. Nearly all were well educated (92 per cent being college graduates and 58 per cent holding advanced degrees). About one-half of them had annual family incomes in excess of $30,000.[22] These findings, it should be noted, were consistent with those reached five years earlier in Sroufe's national survey.[23]

Further, both the EGP and Sroufe discovered that a surprising number of officials on these "lay" bodies (47 per cent in the EGP sample) had professional educator experience in their career backgrounds. The mere categorical representation of a group or class by a public official does not mean that this official will only espouse its preferences. Even so, it is hard to believe that such affiliations do not matter at all; that State Boards do not find it easier to represent adequately those with similar interests than they do those with vastly different life experiences.

That State Boards are disproportionately recruited from the upper strata of society does not distinguish them from other governing institutions in this country. But some of these other institutions, such as state legislatures, are based on mechanisms that, however imperfect, encourage accountability and responsiveness to constituents. Most fundamental of these are competitive elections set in the framework of a two-party system. This mechanism is not found where State Boards are appointed, and, even where these officials are elected, it tends to be only weakly present. The Sroufe and EGP data on Board member election depict it as a "low profile" process with fc substantive issues and modest candidate exertion.[24]

Nor is the absence of "political" responsiveness offset for State Boards by other devices. The contrary has more usually been the case. Media coverage of Board activities is quite skimpy. As for the interest group context in which Boards function, it is characterized not by diversity but by the predominance of education groups.

Toward More Representative State Boards

Having a narrow membership composition, lacking strong constituency linkages, receiving little media attention, and operating in a milieu where educator influence is pervasive, State Boards understandably find it difficult to meet the criterion of democratic representation. It is not, though, an impossible task.

Some Boards over the last decade have taken significant steps to augment their membership, to have their meetings more accessible to different regions of a state, and to expand the use of such citizen input devices as advisory committees and task forces.

But more is required. First, the social composition of Boards must be expanded to include a diversity of backgrounds, experiences and interests. Attractive compensation for the days given to Board service might recruit to these bodies capable persons of modest income. Second, State Boards must develop improved techniques to ascertain and to monitor public sentiment.

Deciding from a myriad of citizen preferences which ones are most "valid" in terms of the breadth, intensity and stability of popular feeling is a central problem in any democratic polity. One technique that merits greater use is the scientific public opinion survey. Its application by pragmatic decision makers like presidential candidates and market researchers suggests the potential value of opinion surveys for State Boards. In employing this device, State Boards should ensure that the surveys are carefully designed to yield policy information from a representative cross section of the population; that the surveys are administered on a regular basis (perhaps every four years) so that emerging issues as well as long term trends can be identified; and that a number of states participate cooperatively in the surveys, making possible comparative analyses of commonalities and differences.

BOARD VISIBILITY

The visibility of State Boards is treated here as a minor theme. The overriding responsibility of State Boards is that they be influential, representative policy making bodies. This responsibility must govern all Board activities. No amount of public relations gimmickry can take the place of a powerful advocacy role in the state education policy system. Effectiveness must be the central goal; visibility is of secondary concern.

State Boards that strive to be policy participants and to speak for citizen interests will become known to other system actors, as well as to a broader audience. Lawmakers and interest groups are not likely to slight a recognized source of policy making influence. Nor is a Board that confronts issues salient to the citizenry likely to be ignored by the media. Boards that seek visibility through means other than effectiveness may well achieve that objective. What will be visible, however, is not going to impress onlookers who are attentive to the substance rather than the imagery of power. *It is the quality of the performance, not its advertisement, that is critical.*

This is not to say that State Boards should neglect real opportunities for encouraging public awareness; these opportunities should always receive first consideration when Boards decide upon the time, location, seating arrangements, procedures and media coverage for their meetings. Yet these are not the essentials. Public awareness will be fostered most when the State Board concentrates on school policy issues and actively as well as openly tries to influence their outcome. Effective Boards not only will be visible boards, but also will be so for the right reason.

A CASE EXAMPLE OF BOARD LEADERSHIP

The EGP study did find some outstanding examples of State Board leadership in deciding education issues. This was particularly evident in Minnesota where the State Board took the lead in fashioning a desegregation policy. After beginning with a general pronouncement and voluntary guidelines, the Board in 1973

established a set of binding directives. The enactment of the desegregation decision illustrates several requisites of Board leadership:[25]

- **Minnesota Board members displayed political courage in facing up to a volatile and abrasive issue.** From their perspective, school segregation was legally suspect, educationally harmful and morally wrong. And they had the courage, in spite of considerable criticism, to act on their convictions.
- **Minnesota Board members seized the policy initiative.** Rather than being pressured into a reactive posture, the Board got out in front early and thereby retained control over the issue.
- **Minnesota Board members became personally informed on the subject of desegregation,** consulting outside experts as well as department sources; and the Board was able to give active direction to the decision process.
- **Minnesota Board members were not doctrinaire; they were willing to strike compromises in order to mobilize public support.** They did retain the vital elements of the desegregation policy, at least as it pertained to racial imbalance.
- **Minnesota Board members worked in harmony with department administrators on the issue.** A team relationship evolved among the policy participants, with the commissioner and his staff not only being a source of information and a "good conscience" for the Board, but also being forceful public advocates of the desegregation plan.

The Minnesota Board was not without formidable opposition to the desegregation effort; and, in the end, it was unable to secure either prompt compliance from the city school districts or adequate funding support from the legislature. The Board, however, had gone about as far toward establishing a meaningful desegregation policy as its influence resources would permit. Whatever its failures, they were not failures of leadership.

A Final Observation

For those who share my values, the fundamental problem can be simply stated: too few State Boards are effective public advocates in the determination of school policy. The general direction of the needed change seems clear: State Boards should give priority to becoming more representative, influential policy making participants. This will require substantial modifications of structure, resources, attitudes and techniques for many of these bodies.

That there are serious constraints on State Board performance must be acknowledged; but the assumption here is that the institution has the potential to undertake the role being prescribed. If the assumption proves false, or if Board members do not realize this potential, then the political forces that are coming to dominate education policy making may well push State Boards to the very margins of the process. Boards that fight to expand their influence and representativeness in the context of these powerful forces will not have to worry about appropriate visibility; it will be a concomitant of their effectiveness.

In this endeavor, State Boards and CSSO's must complement and assist each other; thus developing strength on two fronts, not just one. Logic as well as research support the proposition that *both* chiefs and Boards can and should be influential policy actors.[26]

SECTION III

Action Alternatives

NASBE Staff Recommendations to State Boards of Education

We support completely Dr. Mazzoni's exhortation that State Board effectiveness is much more important than public relations-hyped visibility. Using the five points made by Mazzoni, we suggest the following.

- **Formal Structure. The State Board should establish a systematic mechanism for gathering the views of the education community, analyzing those views and recommending appropriate action to the governor and legislature.** When within its area of authority, the State Board *should* take action. Mechanisms for determining constituency views should be varied—hearings, advisory committees, surveys, opinion polls and position papers.
- **Information Resources. The State Board should have a systematic process to be followed when developing or changing a policy** or regulation, including a determination of the following:

  What kinds of information do we need in order to make a timely and reasoned policy judgment?
  What information will the staff be requested to gather?
  What will be the format of the data when presented to the Board?
  When will the information be due to the Board?
  When the information is presented to the Board, will the Board review it for relevancy and adequacy and decide whether additional information or analysis is needed?

The Board and chief should discuss explicitly whether the Board will hire independent staff or whether the chief will provide staff. If the staff is provided by the chief, the Board and chief need to understand clearly how autonomous the assigned staff will be in responding to Board requests and directives.

- **Time Organization. Annually the Board and chief should establish priorities for the year and organize the Board's time** to deal systematically with the priorities. These priorities should include which policies and regulations the Board will review or develop during the year.

The Board chairperson and chief should develop Board agendas that efficiently deal with routine items and *that leave ample time for full Board work sessions on the annually determined priorities.*

- **Credibility with Lawmakers.** Volume I, No. 3 of NASBE's 1975 *Imperative of Leadership* series, *Strengthening and Improving Relationships Between State Boards of Education and Legislators,* written by California State Board member Dr. Michael Kirst, deals at length with how State Boards can improve their credibility with lawmakers. In summary, State Board members and the chief state school officer should develop *their* legislative package, and each should play an appropriately visible role before the legislature and governor. The State Board must meet with legislators, the education and appropriation committees and the governor on a scheduled basis.
- **Policy Role Expectations. One of the State Board's major functions is policy development. The Board's involvement in this process should be explicitly stated in writing in the Board's by-laws, policies or procedures. The State Board should insist that at least one half of its time be spent on policy related items—both in work sessions and in formal sessions.**

By following these suggestions, and developing a planned approach to public relations, a State Board will be both effective and visible. □

SECTION IV

Appendix

Footnotes

[1]Ewald B. Nyquist, "A State Board Gets the Agenda It Deserves," Unpublished remarks made at Northeast Area Conference, NASBE, May 15, 1972, p. 2.

[2]Stephen K. Bailey, *et al., Schoolmen and Politics.* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1962), p. 28.

[3]Nicholas A. Masters, Robert H. Salisbury and Thomas H. Eliot, *State Politics and the Public Schools.* (New York: Knopf, 1964), pp. 262-264.

[4]Michael D. Usdan, David W. Minar and Emanuel Hurwitz, Jr., *Education and State Politics.* (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1969), p. 171.

[5]Gerald R. Sroufe, "State School Board Members and the State Education Policy System," *Planning & Changing,* 2 (April, 1971), p. 23.

[6]Gerald R. Sroufe, "State School Board Members and Educational Policy," *Administrator's Notebook,* 19 (October, 1970). p. 3.

[7]Michael W. Kirst, "Strengthening and Improving Relationships Between State Boards of Education and Legislators," *The Imperative of Leadership,* Paper No. 3 (Denver: NASBE. 1975), pp. 6-7.

[8]Roald F. Campbell and Tim L. Mazzoni, Jr., *State Policy Making for the Public Schools.* (Berkeley, California: McCutchan, 1976), pp. 47-48.

[9]*Ibid.*, p. 44-46.

[10]See, for example, Michael D. Usdan, "Elementary and Secondary Education" in Robert H. Connery and Gerald Benjamin (eds.), *Governing New York State* (New York: Academy of Political Science, 1974), pp. 225-238.

[11]Campbell and Mazzoni, pp. 48-50; Kirst, pp. 6-7.

[12]Sroufe, "State School Board Members and Educational Policy," p. 3.

[13]Campbell and Mazzoni, pp. 69-70.

[14]*Ibid.*, pp. 52-55; 72-73.

[15]Rodney Cox, Jr. and Waldo Anderson, "Shall State Boards of Education Be Elected or Appointed," Bulletin No. 12. (Tucson, Arizona: Bureau of Educational Research and Service, University of Arizona, 1972), p. 14.

[16]Campbell and Mazzoni, p. 72.

[17]*Ibid.*, pp. 35-40.

[18]*Ibid.*, pp. 359-362.

[19]Kirst, *Strengthening and Improving Relationships Between State Boards of Education and Legislators,* pp. 6-7.

[20]*Ibid.*, pp. 8-12.

[21]Campbell and Mazzoni, pp. 62-65.

[22]*Ibid.*, pp. 340-341.

[23]Sroufe, "State School Board Members and. . . Education Policy System," p. 18.

[24]Sroufe, "State School Board Members and. . . Education Policy System," pp. 19-20; Campbell and Mazzoni, pp. 373-376.

[25]Tim L. Mazzoni, Jr., *State Policy Making for the Public Schools of Minnesota* (St. Paul: University of Minnesota, A-V Service, 1974), pp. 77-105.

[26]Campbell and Mazzoni, pp. 124-125.

Bailey, Stephen K., *et al. Schoolmen and Politics*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1962.

This is the first major study of state school politics. Eight northeastern states were examined with emphasis on the school finance issue. The book is still useful both for historical understanding and for its interest group analysis.

Berke, Joel S. and Michael Kirst. *Federal Aid to Education*. Lexington, Massachusetts: D. C. Heath, 1972.

This report includes a set of case studies of how state governments formulate and implement federal aid policy. Several cases are quite good, at least for historical reference, but there is little comparative analysis.

Berke, Joel S., Michael Kirst and Michael Usdan. *The New State Politics of Education*. Cambridge: Ballinger Press, 1975.

This new text provides basic information on the institutions, actors and decision processes that are involved in state education politics.

Campbell, Roald F. and Tim L. Mazzoni, Jr. *State Policy Making for the Public Schools*. Berkeley, California: McCutchan, 1976.

This work constitutes the most recent research on state education politics. Its focus is on policy making for the public schools and on the role of the State Board, CSSO, governor's office and educational interest groups. A twelve-state comparative analysis is presented in part one; options for state school governance are explicated in part two.

Cox, Richard Jr. and Waldo Anderson. "Shall State Boards of Education be Elected or Appointed?" (Educational Administration Bulletin No. 12, Tucson: University of Arizona, Bureau of Educational Research and Service, 1972.)

This brief paper contains the results of dissertation research on the types of decisions made in 1965-1970 by two State Boards. The authors concluded that selection method had little effect. Both Boards made far more regulatory decisions than any other type.

Iannaccone, Laurence. *Politics In Education*. New York: Center for Applied Research in Education, 1967.

A "structural linkage" typology of state school politics is set forth in chapters 3 and 4, a typology that continues to have utility for assessing relationships among educational interest groups as well as their linkage to the state legislature.

Sroufe, Gerald R. "State School Board Members and the State Education Policy System." *Planning and Changing*. 2 (April 1971), 15-23.

The findings of Sroufe's national survey of the demographic characteristics, recruitment patterns and self-role expectations of State Board members are presented. While the data are not entirely satisfactory, particularly in making inferences to role performance, Sroufe's interpretations are persuasive, if somewhat distressing, and his "political" recommendations strongly challenge the usual prescriptions.

Usdan, Michael D. "Elementary and Secondary Education" in Richard H. Connery and Gerald Benjamin, (eds.) *Governing New York State*. New York: Academy of Political Science, 1974, 225-238.

Usdan offers a readable and insightful look at the changing nature of state education politics during the past decade in New York State.

Usdan, Michael D., David W. Minar and Emanuel Hurwitz, Jr. *Education and State Politics*. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1969.

The authors of this twelve-state comparative study focused on the relationship at the state level between elementary-secondary and higher education, and concluded that it was becoming increasingly competitive.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE BOARDS OF EDUCATION
810 Lincoln Tower
1860 Lincoln Street
Denver, Colorado 80203
(303) 861-0911